



Conseil des traducteurs,  
terminologues et  
interprètes du Canada

Canadian Translators,  
Terminologists and  
Interpreters Council

## - NEWS RELEASE -

### The Day of Reckoning...

**OTTAWA, April 14, 2008** – For many years, the Canadian language industry has talked about it and tried to deal with it. The Canadian courts have lived with it. The warning signs were flying off the wall, and yet, nothing more than band-aid solutions were provided. And now, the Ontario government is being taken to task.

In an article published this morning in the Globe and Mail, we learned that "the Ontario Attorney-General was to be served with a \$35-million class-action lawsuit alleging incompetent government-appointed court interpreters have led to miscarriages of justice and even wrongful convictions."<sup>1</sup>

But it should not be assumed that this is a "local" problem. In numerous other locations in Canada and elsewhere, you will find a shortage of professional interpreters and a rampant usage of incompetent ones in order to keep the justice system rolling.

While the demand for professional interpreters is on the rise (and is forecast, in some circles, to increase by nearly 20% over the next 10 years), the supply remains extremely low. With the current immigration trends, it has become a fact that "foreign languages" interpreters are in huge demand.

So how do we get professional interpreters? According to the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario (ATIO), there are currently 7 certified court interpreters, and some 22 other who are candidates for certification, in the GTA alone. It should be mentioned that certified interpreters go through more stringent training, and that the certification process is far more demanding than accreditation by the Ministry of the Attorney-General of Ontario. Also, it should be remembered that the title of "certified interpreter" is protected by provincial statute and recognized as such throughout the country.

Judges are rightfully expecting "fully trained and professional court interpreters" as they must rely on them to pass fair judgment. Unless the Attorney-General recognizes that accredited interpreters, in general, do not possess the same level of professionalism as certified interpreters do, there will always be difficulties in our courts. While using only certified interpreters would not be the panacea that solves everything, it would represent a meaningful step towards allowing the court system to provide the fairness that the Constitution guarantees for every individual in this country.

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<sup>1</sup> The Globe & Mail, April 14, 2008  
[http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080414.wblatchford\\_14/EmailBNStory/National](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080414.wblatchford_14/EmailBNStory/National)

The Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council (CTTIC) can assume a leadership role in lobbying for better training and support from all levels of government and in the language industry. Already, CTTIC is represented on the Board of the Language Industry Association, and participates in various government-sponsored activities on behalf of the language professions. In order for the language industry to grow and fill the country's current and future needs, CTTIC and its member organizations must band together to find ways to attract new blood, and provide essential formal training. Only then will we see a strong and very professional industry, capable of responding to any challenge it may face.

The Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council brings together the organizations responsible for certifying professional translators, terminologists and interpreters in the provinces and territories. It coordinates the actions of its member organizations and promotes cooperation among them, to ensure uniformity in professional standards, and it conducts relations with national and international bodies representing language specialists. Through its member organizations, CTTIC seeks to promote professional certification as a guarantee of quality and competence, thereby contributing to the advancement of the profession and the protection of the public.

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